

Exhibit M

Request for Religious Exemption from COVID-19 Vaccination

NAME: ____Rachel Spivack____

APPLICATION TO SUPPORT REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION FROM COVID-19 VACCINATION

In order to determine whether your request for a religious exemption from the DAO COVID-19 Vaccination Requirement satisfies legal requirements for a religious exemption, the following additional information must be provided and certified by you as truthful. This information must be provided to Cecilia Madden by 5pm on Wednesday, December 22, 2021, preferably earlier. If you fail to provide this required requested information your exemption request is likely to be denied because there will be incomplete information necessary for the DAO to determine whether your request satisfies legal requirements. If you need additional time to get this information, please contact Cecilia Madden prior to the December 22 deadline. If the requested information does not fit on this form, please attach additional pages as necessary.

Reminder: DAO permits employees to select whatever approved COVID-19 vaccine they believe is best for them.

To Be Completed by Employee:

- 1. Please describe the specific belief that supports your receiving a religious exemption from being vaccinated for COVID-19. [Please note that each vaccine is manufactured differently and that the DAO does not take a position as to which approved COVID-19 vaccine you take. For example, if there is something about the way that the currently-approved COVID-19 vaccines are manufactured that prevents you from receiving them, please identify what that is for *each* vaccine available.]**

All three available brands of COVID-19 vaccines constitute a profound violation of the scriptural prohibitions against forbidden mixtures, *isur kil'ayim*. I believe that our bodies are the repository of the soul made in God's image. Altering our bodies and defiling our blood by injecting mRNA and recombinant DNA technologies constitute a profound violation of the scriptural prohibitions against forbidden mixtures. Orthodox Jews may not intentionally mingle their own body cells with a foreign, unnatural or genetically-modified substance.

The Moderna and Pfizer COVID-19 vaccines are made with mRNA technology. "The mRNA molecules contain the genetic material that provides instructions for our body on how to make a viral protein that triggers an immune response within our bodies," and "this mRNA from the vaccine is released into the cytoplasm of our cells." <https://www.hackensackmeridianhealth.org/HealthU/2021/01/11/a-simple-breakdown-of-the-ingredients-in-the-covid-vaccines/>

"DNA is the original copy of genetic information, but DNA is not used as the direct source of instructions in the cell. Instead, DNA sends genetic information throughout the cell in the form of messenger ribonucleic acid (mRNA). mRNA is a nucleic acid sequence that is complementary to the template DNA strand, but slightly chemically different. The process by which DNA transfers information to mRNA is called transcription. As such, genes can be turned on and off, and messages sent and delivered throughout the cell, with exact precision. Once mRNA is generated, the information it carries must be converted from one language to another. The mRNA "language" using nucleic acids, or genetic code, is translated to a protein "language" using amino acids." <https://lozierinstitute.org/a-visual-aid-to-viral-infection-and-vaccine-production/>

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The Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine uses recombinant DNA technology. <https://www.fda.gov/media/146305/download> This vaccine takes an adenovirus, alters it by replacing a section of its genes with COVID virus genes, and then puts this altered virus into our human cells. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/johnson-johnson-adenovirus-vaccine-explained/vid-20510091> "Once inside, the adenovirus escapes from the bubble and travels to the nucleus, the chamber where the cell's DNA is stored." <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/health/johnson-johnson-covid-19-vaccine.html> Johnson and Johnson is manufactured using aborted fetal cell lines, specifically the PER.C6 aborted fetal cell lines. <https://www.janssenmd.com/janssen-covid19-vaccine/product-properties/product-technology/advac-and-perc6-technology-of-the-janssen-covid19-vaccine> Johnson & Johnson grows the genetically altered adenovirus through the aborted fetal cell lines and then they harvest the virus, filtering all of that material, leaving you with the vaccine. PER.C6 is from an abortion that took place in 1985. https://www.health.nd.gov/sites/www/files/documents/COVID%20Vaccine%20Page/COVID-19_Vaccine_Fetal_Cell_Handout.pdf

In Midrash Leviticus Rabbah, we read that the soul is a guest in the body and that care of the body is deemed a commandment by the great sage Hillel the Elder, who cited the idea in the Creation story that God made the human in the divine image. Injecting such forbidden substances directly into our bloodstream completely challenges scriptural teaching that regards one's body as the repository of the soul made in God's image. We cannot mix our own human cells with this genetically altered material.

These points are expounded upon in the original letter sent.

2. Does the belief identified in Question #1 prevent you from receiving other vaccines or just the COVID-19 vaccine?

X [All Other Vaccines]

☐ Some But Not All Other Vaccines

☐ Only the COVID-19 Vaccine

3. If your belief prevents you from receiving some but not all other vaccines, please identify which vaccines you can receive and which ones you cannot receive and explain the reason for the difference.

4. What other vaccines have you received in the past 10 years?

None.

5. Have you received a religious exemption for any other vaccine requirements in the past? x ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please provide additional details, including which vaccine(s) the exemption was for, when you were granted the exemption, the religious belief underlying the exemption request, and the name of your employer at the time.

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Which vaccine(s) the exemption was for – I was exempted broadly from complying with the University of Pennsylvania's vaccination requirements. The specific vaccine they were asking for prior to the exemption was the tetanus shot.

When you were granted the exemption - 2018

The religious belief underlying the exemption request - In Judaic law, one is not permitted to defile our bodies by injecting forbidden mixtures into our blood and body. Conventional vaccines contain organic matter, from aborted fetal cells, cows, monkeys and chickens, viruses and bacterium, being injected directly into our sacred blood. This organic matter taints our blood and defiles our soul in the same way that the genetic material from COVID-19 vaccines do.

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/pinkbook/downloads/appendices/B/excipient-table-2.pdf>

The name of your employer at the time – I was a student at University of Pennsylvania Law School

6. **Does your belief that you should not be vaccinated for COVID-19 derive from a recognized religion?** X [Yes] ☐ No

If no, please skip to question 7.

If yes, please answer the following questions:

- a. **Please provide the name of the religion:** Orthodox Judaism
- b. **Please indicate when you first began to practice this religion:** 2000
- c. **Have the religious leaders of your religion taken the position that the COVID-19 vaccine violates the tenets of the religion?** X [Yes] ☐ No ☐ Unknown

If yes, who, when and how did they take this position (Please attach copies of any public statements or writings that you are aware of where they stated that getting vaccinated for COVID-19 violates the tenets of your religion?) *if attached

I have submitted a personal letter written on my behalf from Rabbi Yitzchok Chayempour of Ohr Menachem Chabad.

- d. **Have the religious leaders of your religion taken the position that getting the COVID-19 vaccine does not violate the tenets of your religion?** X [No] ☐ Unknown

If yes, who, when, and how did they take this position (Please attach copies of any public statements or writings that you are aware of where they stated that getting vaccinated for COVID-19 does not violate the tenets of your religion?)

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- e. **Do you belong to an organization or group affiliated with this religion (e.g., church, mosque, synagogue, other group, etc.)?** x ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, indicate when you first affiliated with this organization or group:
2015

If yes, please also provide the following information regarding the organization or group.

Name: Congregation Ohr Menachem

Address: 778 Middle Neck Rd, Great Neck, NY 11024

Phone Number: 516-482-2305

Website: magenisraelcenter.com

- f. **Do you attend religious services with this organization or group?** X [Yes] ☐ No

- g. **Does your religious organization have any COVID-19 safety protocols in place?**
X[Yes]

- h. **Does your religious organization require proof of vaccination for their leaders or members as a requirement of attending religious services in-person?** X [No]
If yes, please explain.

7. *Answered yes to Question #6*

8. **Are there other aspects of your beliefs stemming from your religion or religious belief/belief system related to receiving medical care?**
x ☐ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, please explain.

- Sterilization is prohibited.
- Vasectomies are prohibited.
- Sperm donations are prohibited.
- Autopsies are prohibited. In Judaic law, it is forbidden to even perform an autopsy on a dead body. We must respect these bodies as temples of God. We cannot cut apart any dead bodies. Scripture prohibits us from disgracing a corpse in such a way.
- Death is considered when there is the cessation of all brain wave activity, not just cessation of breath and heartbeat. Hospice and end of life care are therefore closely regulated by Jewish law.
- Animal testing is required for new drugs and treatments prior to testing on humans.
- Euthanasia is prohibited. Every measure to preserve life must be taken
- One is prohibited from donating their body "to science."

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9. **Are there any activities relating to your health that you engage in or refrain from related to your religion or religious belief/belief system? (any dietary rules, medical restrictions, etc...).** ☐ [Yes]

If yes, please describe these activities.

- I keep strictly kosher, which includes utensils along with all food and drink and medicines.
- I refrain from eating milk and meat together.
- I refrain from eating milk within 6 hours of consuming meat.
- I refrain from eating meat within 1 hour of consuming milk.
- I do not mix fish and meat and rinse my mouth out between consuming them.
- I also hold myself to a higher level than standard kosher which prohibits me from consuming unwatched dairy products (chalav yisrael).
- I avoid taking medications which lack Rabbinic certification or whose ingredients I do not know.
- On various days throughout the year, I do not eat any food or drink any water due to religious fast days.
- On sabbath and holidays, I do not take pain-relieving medications such as Tylenol and aspirin. I only take antibiotics on the sabbath if I have already been taking them at least 3 days prior.
- I avoid any and all medical procedures on sabbath and holidays unless it is immediately life-threatening.
- On yom kippur and tisha b'av we do not apply any ointments or medicinal creams.
- On sabbath I refrain from exercise due to it being considered being medicinal and we refrain from practices that can be considered medicinal on sabbath.
- I do not cut my toenails on the same day. When they are cut, I cut them in a specific order. I flush the cut nails down the drain. I ritually wash my hands after.
- I consult with my rabbi regarding medical care and treatments. It is important to understand that Orthodox Judaism does not have a single central authority. Many decisions related to modern medical treatment and Jewish law require interpretation and extrapolation from ancient sources. As a result, rabbis with different approaches to interpreting rabbinic texts may come to different, but equally valid, rulings about a course of action. One is required to follow the rulings of his or her personal rabbinic authority. This is part of the reason there is variability in some aspects of religious practice within the Orthodox community.
- I dress in accordance with the modesty standards outlined in Jewish law.
- I immerse myself in a ritual bath once a month

10. **Do you have children who attend school?** ☒ [No]

If yes, please include their ages, the name of the schools or districts, and whether or not their schools require proof COVID-19 vaccination for their teachers, administrative staff or students of eligible age.

11. **Do you have any additional documentation supporting your application for exemption from the COVID-19 vaccination requirement based on a sincerely held religious belief? Additional documentation may include but is not limited to the following:**

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- a. Documentation from a leader within your religious organization (or organization equivalent to a religious organization) supporting your belief that your religion prevents you from receiving any COVID-19 vaccination.

Yes, I submitted a letter from my Rabbi.

- b. A statement from someone who is familiar with your beliefs confirming how your religious belief prevents you from receiving COVID-19 vaccination.

Any additional documentation that you submit will be considered in conjunction with your exemption request. The information that you submitted earlier with your initial exemption request will be considered along with this supplemental information.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the above information is true and correct to the best of my information and belief.

R. Spivack
Signature

Rachel Spivack
Printed Name

ADA, Juvenile Diversion
Job Title & Department

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12/22/2021
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